United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1004
25 October 1991

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General and UNESCO Director-General appeal to all parties in Yugoslavia to respect 1954 Hague Convention for Protection of Cultural Property in Event of Armed Conflict.

- Political and Security Committee hears call from representative of Belarus to establish nuclear-weapon-free zone in his region; nuclear-weapon-free zone in Middle East also discussed.

- Representative of Colombia tells Social Committee that Secretary-General's report on world social situation fails to give balanced global coverage.

- Speakers in Legal Committee cite burning of Kuwaiti oil wells by Iraqi forces and crude oil spills as violations of environmental and humanitarian law.

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Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar and the Director-General of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Federico Mayor, have appealed to all the parties in Yugoslavia to end the conflict and to negotiate a peaceful settlement of their differences.

In a joint declaration, issued simultaneously in New York and Paris, they said they were "deeply concerned" by news of the worsening situation in Yugoslavia, particularly by reports indicating that the old city of Dubrovnik might have been damaged by shelling. They appealed to all parties to respect the principles enshrined in the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and the 1972 World Heritage Convention. Dubrovnik is inscribed on the World Heritage list.

The declaration said that UNESCO was preparing to send a high-level representative to Yugoslavia to consult on all questions relating to the protection of the country's cultural and natural heritage and called on all parties involved to comply with the Conventions.

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The representative of Belarus this morning called for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in his region, as the General Assembly's First Committee (Political and Security) continued its debate on disarmament issues. He said the zone should encompass Belarus, the Ukraine, the three Baltic States and any other neighbouring States wishing to be part of it.

Earlier this week, the representatives of Qatar and Egypt had expressed support for the Secretary-General's proposal for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Referring to several Egyptian initiatives on the subject, the representative of Egypt said Israel's refusal to adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards had fueled suspicion in the region regarding its nuclear programme as well as its motivations.

Meanwhile, Israel has stated, in an addendum to the Secretary-General's report to the Assembly on a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the Middle East, dated 22 October, that pressure to put its nuclear installations under IAEA inspection ignored Israel's special security concerns, which were illustrated by the Gulf war, and Iraq's SCUD missile attacks. Before such a zone could be established, Israel said, the Arab States needed to publicly recognize and accept the State of Israel as an integral part of the region, and renounce the anti-Israeli boycott. Without such assurances, it would not consider putting its nuclear programme under international scrutiny.

* * *

The Secretary-General's interim report on the world social situation has been criticized by Colombia for giving wider coverage to certain countries and regions, particularly those undergoing the transition from a centrally planned to a market economy, than to others.

Addressing the General Assembly's Fourth Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural), yesterday, the representative of Colombia, Ana Mercedes Botero, said the social situation of all countries and regions of the world should receive equal coverage in the upcoming 1993 report.

Other speakers in the Social Committee stressed the need for measures to halt the negative effects of structural adjustment policies, which they said, had worsened conditions for the poorest sectors of developing countries.

* * *

The General Assembly's Sixth Committee (Legal) has ended its debate on new laws to protect the environment in time of war with many speakers voicing disagreement on whether new legal regimes were needed. The Committee has been considering an item which states that the 1977 United Nations Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques is "painfully inadequate".

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Many delegations cited violations of environmental and humanitarian law, in particular the burning of Kuwaiti oil wells by Iraqi forces during the Gulf crisis.

The representative of Iraq, Safa S. Ahmed, said the international community had ignored the environmental damage suffered by his country as a result of allied bombing. Such damage, he said, included the destruction of water and sewerage treatment systems, oil facilities, and power-generating plants.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

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28 October 1991

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

◆ Secretary-General asks United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to lend her good offices in helping internally displaced persons affected by conflict in Yugoslavia.

◆ Secretary-General, in statement to mark Day Devoted to African Debt, calls for lasting solution to Africa's external indebtedness.

◆ Secretary-General proposes advance payments against future assessments by those Member States in a position to do so, as short-term solution to United Nations financial crisis.

◆ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to send high-level mission to city of Dubrovnik.

◆ United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia to begin deployment during first two weeks of November.

◆ Full integration of disabled, youth and elderly into society called for in Social Committee.

◆ Special Political Committee begins review of peace-keeping operations.

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Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar has asked the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Mrs. Sadako Ogata, to consider assisting the "needy" internally displaced persons affected by the conflict in Yugoslavia. He calls the growth in the number of displaced persons within Yugoslavia "the most serious humanitarian problem" caused by the fighting, aside from direct casualties and the destruction of housing and various infrastructural facilities.

In a report to the Security Council of 25 October, the Secretary-General said present indications were that the total number of internally displaced persons was approximately 300,000; according to the most recent estimates of

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For information media—not an official record

the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), that number might increase to at least 400,000 by the end of this year. He said Mrs. Ogata had informed him that she was prepared to examine on an urgent basis how the UNHCR could be of assistance in Yugoslavia. The involvement of the High Commissioner might also have a welcome preventive impact and contribute to the creation of conditions that would ultimately enable the internally and externally displaced to return to their homes.

The Secretary-General further cited the serious economic consequences of the crisis in Yugoslavia, noting that even in the case of a cease-fire in the near future, the economic effects would remain for a long time to come. That aspect, he said, represented yet another imperative for a halt to the fighting and a negotiated settlement.

The Secretary-General's Personal Envoy, former United States Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, returned recently from a fact-finding mission to Yugoslavia. Mr. Vance reported among other things that the embargo imposed by the Security Council on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Yugoslavia was being violated.

The Security Council is scheduled to take up the Secretary-General's report this week.

* * *

The Secretary-General called today for a lasting solution to Africa's external indebtedness and the creation of a "solid basis" for integrating all countries, developed as well as developing, into the global economy.

In a statement on the occasion of the Day Devoted to the African Debt, Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar said an open international trading system and adequate finance were essential to facilitate the structural changes required to improve the competitiveness of the African economies in the global market. He called on the international community to address the root causes of the global problems that threaten the collective security.

The day-long meeting was organized by the Acting Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, Issa Ben Yacine Diallo, and by the Reverend Leon Sullivan, Co-Chairman of the African/African-American Summit, in an effort to sensitise decision-makers around the world to the urgent need for debt relief in Africa.

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The Secretary-General has stated that "talk of a new era of cooperation and commitment to the goals of the Charter, will remain ill-founded as long as the ability of the Organization to fulfill its growing responsibilities was undermined by the current financial crisis".

In his report to the General Assembly on the financial situation of the United Nations dated 24 October, Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar proposed advance

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payments against future assessments by those Member States which were in a position to do so, as a short-term solution to the problem. He also reminded the Assembly that permission to borrow commercially, which had been rejected by the body, had been approved for several United Nations specialized agencies.

The Secretary-General stressed that it was "incumbent" on the membership to provide a means to meet the tasks entrusted to the United Nations. He reiterated that unless "substantial contributions" were received shortly, the cash required to meet regular budget obligations and those of certain new peace-keeping operations would exceed the funds available from the peace-keeping accounts. Given those circumstances, the Secretary-General said, the Organization would become "insolvent and unable to meet its commitments". The United Nations is currently owed over $1.3 billion by Member States.

* * *

An advance party for a mission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to Yugoslavia left Paris today for the city of Dubrovnik. The Agency is preparing to sent a high-level representative to Yugoslavia to consult on all questions relating to the protection of the country's cultural and natural heritage.

Speaking at the UNESCO General Conference on Friday, 25 October, the delegate of Yugoslavia told the plenary that he had just handed over a letter from the Yugoslav Prime Minister to UNESCO Director-General Mayor. The letter stated that Yugoslavia would accept the visit of the mission to Dubrovnik with "great pleasure". The delegate said Yugoslavia would give all necessary assistance to UNESCO's advance party and to the mission to the embattled city, which is inscribed on the World Heritage list.

* * *

It was announced at Headquarters today that the United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC) has officially begun its operation.

The Security Council, on 16 October, authorized the establishment of an Advance Mission to assist the Cambodian parties in maintaining the cease-fire in preparation for a proposed United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC).

The Advance Mission, which will be headquartered in Phnom Penh, is expected to reach full deployment by mid-December. It will be absorbed into the Transition Authority once the Security Council officially establishes the creation of UNTAC and the General Assembly approves its budget.

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The full integration of the disabled, the youth and the elderly into society, through education, training and equal opportunities, was called for today by several delegations to the General Assembly's Third Committee

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(Social, Humanitarian and Cultural), as it continued its discussion of social development issues.

The representative of Spain, Consuelo Valdes, reiterated the need to review the question of translating terminology now used to describe disabled persons in United Nations documents. These terms she said, include disability-related terms such as "impairment" and "handicapped," which could be considered pejorative or discriminatory. She said this matter should be dealt with by the end of the Decade.

* * *

A call for the establishment of a working capital fund and a reserve stock of equipment for peace-keeping operations was made today before the General Assembly's Special Political Committee by the Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs, Marrack Golding.

As the Committee began its comprehensive review of "the whole question of peace-keeping operations in all their aspects", Mr. Golding asserted that peacekeeping was in an evolutionary phase in which new tasks had placed increasing demands on the Secretariat. Administrative and financial difficulties needed to be addressed if delays in deployment were to be avoided, he said. He also stressed that "something must be done to ensure that there is money in the kitty" to meet the start-up costs of a new operation.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

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29 October 1991

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General expresses hope for success of Peace Conference on Middle East to begin in Madrid tomorrow.

- Secretary-General, in Disarmament Week statement, calls on world leaders to reverse arms race and build better, more secure societies; President of General Assembly also makes statement.

- General Assembly adopts resolutions calling for strengthened cooperation with Latin American economic systems and Islamic Conference.

- Political and Security Committee hears call for nuclear-weapon-free status for Korean Peninsula as disarmament debate continues.

- World Health Organization to help four developing countries develop their capacity to test anti-AIDS vaccine.

* * *

Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar has expressed hope for the success of the Peace Conference on the Middle East, which will begin tomorrow in Madrid.

When asked by correspondents this morning whether he was optimistic about the Conference, he said he was hopeful that something could be achieved and that he thought it was "high time for the world to dedicate its efforts to the solution of the Middle East problem".

The Secretary-General has sent his Special Representative, Eduard Brunner, as an observer to the Peace Conference.

* * *

It would be militarily dangerous and morally deplorable to allow the emergence of new nuclear-weapon States, the Secretary-General stated today. The objective must be to make the nuclear-weapon non-proliferation regime universal, he said.

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For information media—not an official record

Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar was addressing the General Assembly's first Committee (Political and Security) at special meeting to mark Disarmament Week.

In his remarks, the Secretary-General further called on the world community to steadfastly encourage further reduction in strategic nuclear forces and urged the serious re-examination of the entire question of nuclear-weapons testing.

He noted that dramatic changes in international relations had led to a comprehensive re-examination of the old doctrines that had hindered progress towards arms reduction. At the same time, he said, the exacerbation of dormant tensions and the emergence of new clashes indicated how delicate was the balance of security.

In his statement, Assembly President Samir S. Shihabi of Saudia Arabia said that the relaxation in international relations had strengthened United Nations efforts to act more effectively. Its increased ability to consolidate international cooperation had been evident in the response to the Gulf crisis.

The observance of Disarmament Week was initiated by the First Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in 1978. The week begins on 24 October, which is the day of the founding of the United Nations. Governments and non-governmental organizations are urged to take advantage of the Week to increase public awareness of the dangers of the arms race, in particular the nuclear-arms race.

* * *

The General Assembly yesterday called for strengthened cooperation between the United Nations and two regional organizations -- the Latin American Economic System (SELA) and the Organizations of the Islamic Conference. The Assembly took that action by adopting two resolutions without a vote, concerning each organization.

In adopting the resolution on SELA, the Assembly welcomed the agreement signed last month between the United Nations and the Latin American Economic System, by which they established a means to exchange information on economic and social matters and to coordinate efforts to collect, analyse, publish and disseminate information concerning such matters.

By adopting the resolution on the Islamic Conference, the Assembly recommended that a general meeting between the organizations be held next year. It also urged the United Nations to increase technical and other forms of assistance to the Conference.

* * *

The representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Kim Chang Guk, called yesterday for the withdrawal of all nuclear weapons from the south of the Peninsula, as the General Assembly's First Committee (Political and Security) continued its debate on disarmament. Once the Peninsula has

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been declared a nuclear-weapon-free zone, he said, the United States, the Soviet Union and China should legally guarantee that status.

Mr. Chang Guk said that his country, which faced a nuclear threat from the South, was unwilling to accept unilateral inspections of its nuclear facilities, but it would accept inspections if they were simultaneously conducted in the North and the South of the Peninsula. "We have neither the capability to have a nuclear arms race with other nations", he said, "nor the intention to develop nuclear weapons to destroy our own nation".

* * *

A United Nations Press Officer reported from Geneva today that the World Health Organization (WHO) had announced that it would help four developing countries improve their capacity to test anti-AIDS vaccines. The Agency said that it was important to ensure that developing countries could participate in the testing of the vaccine.

The Director of the WHO's Global AIDS Programme, Michael Merson, said that testing anti-AIDS vaccines in developing countries would accelerate the development of appropriate vaccines where the need was greatest. The WHO had chosen Brazil, Rwanda, Thailand and Uganda as trial sites and would help those countries to finance laboratory equipment and train their scientists. Experimental vaccines were now being tested in small numbers on human volunteers in North America and Europe.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1007
30 October 1991

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

◆ Security Council expresses concern of deteriorating situation in Yugoslavia -- especially "tragic humanitarian" situation; welcomes Secretary-General's decision to continue mission of Cyrus Vance.

◆ Twenty-three Governments pledge $928,953 at World Disarmament Campaign pledging conference for 1991.

◆ Following suspension of negotiations over visit of Portuguese Parliamentary delegation to East Timor, Secretary-General appeals to Governments of Indonesia and Portugal to reconsider their positions.

◆ French representative tells Political and Security Committee that his country's nuclear testing programme guarantees safety necessary for protection of environment and public health.

* * *

The Security Council held consultations this afternoon to consider the Secretary-General's report of 24 October on the situation in Yugoslavia.

Following consultations, the President of the Security Council, Chinmaya Rajaninath Gharekhan of India, told correspondents that the Council was concerned over the deteriorating situation in Yugoslavia and especially what he called "the tragic humanitarian" situation in that country. Members of the Council particularly welcomed the Secretary-General's decision to continue with the mission to Yugoslavia of his Personal Envoy, Cyrus Vance.

The President said Council members had also expressed concern that the arms embargo imposed by its resolution 713 (1991) was not being respected.

In the Secretary-General's report, which is based on a previous ten-day mission to Belgrade and other European cities by Cyrus Vance, the Secretary-General called for a halt to the fighting and a negotiated settlement to the four-month conflict in Yugoslavia. He said he had asked the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Mrs. Sadako Ogata, to consider assisting the 300,000 internally displaced persons affected by the

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For information media—not an official record

fighting. The Secretary-General called the problem of refugees "the most serious humanitarian problem" caused by fighting, aside from direct casualties and the destruction of housing and various infrastructural facilities.

* * *

Twenty-three Governments pledged yesterday almost $1 million at the ninth United Nations Pledging Conference for the World Disarmament Campaign. In addition to the Voluntary Trust Fund of the World Disarmament Campaign, contributions were made to the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament and to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research.

Addressing the Conference, its President, Nugroho Wisnumurti of Indonesia, said that despite broad support from member countries for disarmament activities, the weak financial base of the Campaign could not sustain it over a period of time. The Campaign had therefore been unable to fully respond to numerous requests from its constituencies.

Also addressing the Conference, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs Yashushi Akashi said that "just as the world Disarmament Campaign is meeting new challenges, it is being handicapped be a weak financial base". He expressed hope that the valuable activities of the Campaign and the Regional Centres would be continued and even expanded through the assistance of States.

* * *

A United Nations spokesman said today that following reports that the Governments of Indonesia and Portugal had suspended negotiations on a visit of a Portuguese Parliamentary delegation to East Timor,the Secretary-General had appealed to the two sides to reconsider their positions.

The spokesman said the Secretary-General had made the appeal in view of the extensive preparations that had already taken place and the agreement reached during talks held in New York that the names of the international journalists on that visit be discussed informally. Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar expressed hope that the matter would be resolved through further discussions.

The reason for the suspension was that Indonesia had vetoed the participation of an Australian journalist who was to accompany the Portuguese delegation, the spokesman said.

* * *

The representative of France, Gerard Errera, defended his country's nuclear testing programme on the grounds of legitimate defence needs, as the General Assembly's First Committee (Political and Security) this morning continued its disarmament debate. "The conditions under which the French tests are performed present all the guarantees of safety necessary for the protection of the environment and public health", he added.

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France conducted the tests under a strictly limited programme and the frequency of the tests had constantly been declining, Mr. Errera said. France's nuclear tests, carried out underground on its national territory, he noted, were not prejudicial to the interests of the States of the region. France had invited the representatives of States of the region as well as independent international scientists to verify for themselves the effects of the tests on the environment and the geological character and the health of the populations of the region. The tests had demonstrated that the artificial radioactivity near the French test site did not differ in level nor in quality from that of the rest of the South Pacific or the South Atlantic, Mr. Errera said.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

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31 October 1991

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council expresses its full support for agreements on comprehensive political settlement of Cambodia conflict, signed in Paris on 23 October.

- President Aristide says people of Haiti "will continue to work for return of democracy".

- Foreign Minister of Italy appeals to United Kingdom and United States to reconsider their decision in mid-1980s to leave United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

- Second United Nations Biological Weapons Inspection Team to Iraq reports that it did not find any such weapons during its mission from 20 September to 3 October.

- General Committee recommends to Assembly inclusion of item on financing of United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia.

* * *

The Security Council this evening unanimously expressed its full support for the Peace Agreements on a comprehensive political settlement of the Cambodia conflict, signed in Paris on 23 October.

By the resolution adopted by all 15 Members, the Council welcomed the agreements and authorized the Secretary-General to designate a Special Representative for Cambodia to act on his behalf. It also welcomed the intention of the Secretary-General to send a survey mission to Cambodia as soon as possible to prepare a plan for implementing the mandate envisaged in the agreements.

The Council further requested the Secretary-General to submit a report containing his implementation plan, including in particular a detailed estimate of the cost of the United Nations Transition Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), on the understanding that this report would be the basis on which the Council would authorize the establishment of UNTAC and approve its budget.

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For information media—not an official record

Speaking to correspondents before the Council meeting, the Permanent representative of the United Kingdom, Sir David Hannay, said the resolution was "an important step" along the "lengthy and crucial road" to peace and stability in Cambodia.

* * *

Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide told the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) General Conference yesterday in Paris that the people of Haiti "will not bow to the dictates of the military coup leaders", but "will continue to work for return of democracy".

In his statement to the conference, the Haitian President ruled out the use of violence against the 30 September coup leaders, saying "some people may take this as naivité in politics, but we believe that the force of non-violence may cross the world and prove itself more powerful that the strength of guns and tanks".

The UNESCO General Conference, which began on 14 October, will end on 7 November.

* * *

The Foreign Minister of Italy, Gianni de Michelis, appealed yesterday in Paris to the United States and the United Kingdom to reconsider their decision to leave UNESCO in the mid-1980s.

Mr. Michelis made the appeal at the 26th session of UNESCO's General Conference, saying that at a time when "breathtaking changes" in the world gave new responsibilities to UNESCO, the two countries' return to the Organization was of "fundamental importance".

In a letter sent to the Foreign Ministers of the United Kingdom and the United States, the Italian Minister recalled the willingness of the Organization to reform and improve the functioning of UNESCO. He also emphasized the importance played by culture, in its largest meaning, as an instrument of dialogue among people and to counteract social disintegration.

* * *

A United Nations spokesman announced today that the Second United Nations Biological Weapons Inspection Mission to Iraq had not found any biological weapons or facilities for filling weapons during its visit to that country, from 20 September to 3 October. The team concluded that Iraq's research programme on biological agent for military purposes logically would have included a plan for weapons development and production, possibly at a site not yet identified. The inspectors identified a number of sites for which they would recommend future monitoring, the spokesman said.

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At the request of the Secretary General, the General Committee this morning recommended the inclusion of an item entitled "Financing of the United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia" (UNAMIC) in the agenda of the General Assembly's forty-sixth session.

The Committee further recommended that the item on UNAMIC, which the Secretary-General characterized as "important" and "urgent", be allocated to the General Assembly's Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary).

The Assembly will consider the Committee's recommendation in plenary on Monday, 4 November.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1009
1 November 1991

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

◆ Secretary-General recommends to Security Council that it extends mandate of United Nations Observer Group in Central America, until 31 April 1992.

◆ Security Council endorses Secretary-General's proposal for military composition of United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia.

◆ Representative of Poland tells Administrative and Budgetary Committee during debate on personnel questions that practice of hiring nationals of same country to fill given post must continue.

◆ General Assembly welcomes projects and events for promotion of peace.

◆ Economic and Financial Committee hears introduction of drafts on promoting entrepreneurship and assistance to Namibia.

* * *

Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar has recommended to the Security Council that it renews the mandate of the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA), until the end of next April.

In a report to the Council, dated 28 October, the Secretary-General said although there was relative peace in Nicaragua, and active negotiations were underway to resolve outstanding conflicts in El Salvador and Guatemala, now was not the time to withdraw the United Nations peace-keeping force.

He expressed confidence that the five Central American Governments would achieve rapid progress in arriving at new collective security arrangements in the region and would soon be able to dispense with the need for international verification. In the meantime, he said, in the present "fluid and dynamic situation", he did not think it wise to withdraw the ONUCA or further reduce the scope of its operations.

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For information media—not an official record

The Security Council has endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal for the composition of military elements in the United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC).

In a letter of 31 October, the President of the Council for the month of October, Chinmaya Rajaninath Gharekhan (India), said Council Members had agreed with the Secretary-General's proposal.

Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar said in a letter to the Council President on 29 October that he had received replies from twenty-two States who has expressed readiness to contribute military personnel to the Mission.

* * *

Eliminating the practice by which the United Nations Secretariat consistently hires nationals of the same country to fill a given post would be premature. That's what the representative of Poland, Jan Woroniecki, told the General Assembly's Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary), yesterday as it continued debate on personnel questions.

He said that it would prevent representatives of the new democratic regimes in Central and Eastern Europe from getting jobs with the Organization. Instead, he added, it would effectively enable seconded officials from the former Communist regimes to "lock-in" their assignments by getting their contracts renewed.

Mr. Woroniencki said that despite the appeal to increase the number of staff from Member States who do not hold enough posts at the United Nations according to the rules of geographical representation, which is the case with Poland, the opposite was happening. He said consideration of new candidates did not get any positive result, whereas those submitted by the former Communist regimes had no difficulty in getting reappointment.

The Secretary-General has called for an end to the practice of replacement in order to abide by the general rule that no post should be considered the exclusive preserve of any member country.

* * *

The General Assembly has acknowledged the Secretary-General's designation of more than 400 organizations and cities as "Peace Messengers" for their promotion of world peace.

In adopting a resolution, yesterday, concerning projects and special events initiated for the promotion of peace, the Assembly welcomed the coordinating role of the Peace Studies Unit of the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs. The resolution, which was introduced by Costa Rica, was adopted without a vote.

A related resolution, welcoming the establishment of the Institute of East-West Dynamics, was also adopted without a vote. Introduced by Poland,

(more)

the resolution recommended that the Institute assist transitional societies in developing their democratic institutions and market mechanisms.

Also yesterday, the Assembly began consideration of the question of restructuring and revitalizing the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields. In May, the Assembly had decided to carry out a review of its subsidiary bodies and those of the Economic and Social Council.

* * *

By the terms of a 34-Power draft resolution introduced by the United States this morning in the General Assembly's Economic and Financial Committee (Second), the Assembly would request the United Nations system to increase activities related to the promotion of entrepreneurship and the development of the private sector in interested countries. The Committee was continuing its discussion of special economic and disaster relief assistance.

By the draft, the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation would be requested to give attention to the coordination of the promotion of activities, particularly through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and include pertinent information about such economic development activities, notably in small and medium-sized enterprises in his annual development report.

The Committee also heard the introduction of a draft by Ghana, on behalf of the "Group of 77" developing countries, which would have the Assembly extend special assistance to Namibia equivalent to that given to a least developed country.

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United Nations

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DH/1010
4 November 1991

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General says he is "encouraged" by developments in Middle East peace conference in Madrid.

- General Assembly takes up strengthening Humanitarian aid coordination; elects 19 members of Trade Law Commission.

- Legal Committee approves draft calling on States to act as good neighbours.

- Social Committee hears proposal by representative of Colombia for United Nations to draft international convention on reduction of demand for illicit drugs.

- Two-day meeting to focus on disadvantaged South Africans in humanitarian, social and development fields begins in Geneva.

* * *

Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar has said that he is encouraged by developments over the past few days in the Middle East peace conference in Madrid.

A United Nations spokesman told correspondents that the Secretary-General was awaiting the report by Edouard Brunner, his Special Representative for the Middle East, who is the United Nations observer at the conference.

In a separate development, the spokesman told correspondents that the Secretary-General had expressed concern over unconfirmed press reports indicating that 1991 Nobel Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi of Myanmar was either dead, in a coma or on a hunger strike.

On being awarded the Nobel Peace prize in October, the Secretary-General called Ms. Kyi a remarkable leader who had shown "great courage and a deep attachment to non-violence and democracy".

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For information media—not an official record

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The General Assembly this morning began consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the coordination of United Nations humanitarian emergency assistance.

Discussion focused on the Secretary-General's proposal to appoint a high-level coordinator to assist him in responding to emergencies, the establishment of a central emergency revolving fund and the need for a strengthened early warning system.

In other action, the Assembly decided to add to its agenda an item entitled "Financing of the United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia" and allocated it to the Fifth Committee.

The Assembly also elected the nineteen States to the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) for a six-year term beginning 1 May 1992. The 36-member Commission, which began work in 1968, was established by the Assembly to promote the harmonization and unification of the law of international trade.

* * *

The Assembly's Sixth Committee (Legal) today approved without a vote a draft which would have the Assembly call upon all States to act as good neighbours in their dealings with other States and when taking decisions that could affect them. The text, which was presented by the Chairman, would also have the Assembly express the conviction that good-neighbourliness was best fostered when all States respected the rule of law.

Among those addressing the Committee, the representative of Tanzania, Jerry E.J. Mburi, said his country had serious doubts about the usefulness of an exercise aimed at good-neighbourliness. He pointed out the impracticality of persuading States to follow certain patterns of conduct and at widely varying geographical characteristics and historical backgrounds.

* * *

Without chemical procedures there would be no cocaine, and without the complicity of the international financial mechanism, there would be no drug trafficking. This view was expressed by the representative of Colombia, Fernando Cepeda. in the Assembly's Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) this morning as it began its discussion of narcotic drugs. He proposed that the United Nations draft an international convention on the reduction of demand for illicit drugs because a synchronized effort to combat drugs was necessary.

* * *

A meeting to focus on ways and means to address the enormous needs of disadvantaged South Africans in the humanitarian, social, educational and development fields began today in Geneva.

Attended by representatives of some 40 national and international organizations from various regions, the two-day meeting has been organized by the Special Committee Against Apartheid and representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and anti-apartheid movements.

The purpose of the meeting is to assess activities and programmes in light of the changing political climate in South Africa and to continue coordinating support for the political process in South Africa during the transition period.

As a result of their last consultations, held in October last year, NGOs and anti-apartheid movements issued a plan of action to provide a framework for mobilizing international public opinion and to promote action to secure rapid progress towards the creation of a united, non-racial democratic South Africa.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1011
5 November 1991

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General asks Sadruddin Aga Khan to go to Iraq to make new assessment of humanitarian situation in that country.

- Secretary-General appoints A.H.S. Ataul Karim of Bangladesh as Chief Liaison Officer and Head of United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia.

- Secretary-General urges parties in talks on El Salvador to exercise utmost caution in their public statements.

- General Assembly hears proposals for reorganizing United Nations relief efforts in response to natural and man-made disasters.

- Social Committee hears proposal by representative of Côte d'Ivoire to create fund against drug trafficking.

* * *

Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar said in reply to questions by correspondents this morning that he had asked his Executive Delegate, Sadruddin Aga Khan, to go to Iraq in order to make a new assessment of the humanitarian situation in that country.

The Secretary-General was replying to a question whether Sadruddin Aga Khan was going to Baghdad in the near future to renegotiate the agreement which permits the distribution of food and medicine and allows the presence of a United Nations security force.

Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar was also asked about his views on Iraq's refusal to go ahead with the oil sale in order to increase international pressure for the lifting of the sanctions. He replied that Iraq would have to present its position to the Security Council which would then decide which action to take.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

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The Secretary-General has appointed Mr. A.H.S. Ataul Karim as the Chief Liaison Officer and Head of the United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC).

Prior to his present appointment, Mr. Karim served from December 1987 to September 1991 as Bangladesh's Ambassador to the United States and, concurrently, from August 1988 to May 1990 as Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations.

A career diplomat, Mr. Karim has previously served as his country's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Offices in Geneva and Vienna.

* * *

A United Nations spokesman announced today that talks between the Government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberacion Nacional had resumed yesterday in Mexico City.

The spokesman told correspondents that the Secretary-General had urged the parties to exercise the "utmost circumspection in their public statements at this delicate stage in the negotiations". The Secretary-General's Personal Representative for Central America, Alvaro de Soto, who is attending the talks, had expressed hope that negotiations would continue extensively throughout the month, with only short breaks for consultations.

Under-Secretary-General Marrack Goulding had met last week with El Salvadoran President Christiani and the Minister of Defence for a discussion on cease-fire arrangements. Mr. Goulding would join the talks at the appropriate time, the spokesman said.

* * *

The question of reorganizing United Nations emergency humanitarian relief systems and assigning the task of coordinating such efforts to a high-level Secretariat official was raised by several delegations, as the General Assembly this morning continued its debate on strengthening such international assistance.

The issue of national sovereignty was raised by several speakers who were concerned that humanitarian assistance could be used as a guise for political intervention. Proposals for improving efficiency in disaster relief were also examined, with some speakers suggesting that such improvements should take place in the context of overall United Nations administrative reform.

Among those addressing the Assembly, the representative of Canada, Yves Fortier, said his country endorsed the Secretary-General's recommendations that a $50 million fund be created to be replenished by the fund raised through a joint appeal under the authority of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO). Canada would support whatever method of financing would lead to the most rapid creation of the fund, either assessments or voluntary contributions.

The representative of Pakistan, Jamsheed K.A. Marker, said the most critical phase of an emergency was during the first few days. Pakistan supported initiatives which were aimed at reducing the response period of the United Nations to an emergency situation to the very minimum.

* * *

The General Assembly's Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) heard yesterday a proposal for the establishment of an account to fight illicit trafficking by using illegal drug money which had been frozen in banks.

The proposal came from the representative of Côte d'Ivoire, Dienebou Kaba-Camara, who said the account should be similar to the one created by the Council to finance the humanitarian needs of Iraq.

She said Africa was becoming increasingly exposed to the drug problem due to changes in the location of centres of activities of drug traffickers. Africa needed greater attention on the part of the international community, to face that problem which was an addition to its already long list of problems, including political instability and civil wars.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1012
6 November 1991

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

◆ Secretary-General says he is "disappointed" that European Community has been unable so far to solve conflict in Yugoslavia.

◆ Security Council extends mandate of United Nations Observer Group in Central America until 30 April 1992.

◆ General Assembly concludes debate on United Nations humanitarian emergency assistance.

◆ Secretary-General reports that cease-fire in Angola has been "well respected" by both sides since it took effect over five months ago.

◆ Day of Solidarity With Detained United Nations Staff is observed at Headquarters.

◆ Economic and Financial Committee approves draft welcoming joint Ghana/World Health Organization initiative to hold international forum on health, in Accra.

◆ Secretary-General renews his appeal to Government of Myanmar to release 1991 Nobel Prize Winner Aung San Suu Kyi.

* * *

Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar said this morning that he was disappointed that the European Community had not been able so far to solve the conflict in Yugoslavia.

He made the comment when asked by correspondents if the United Nations were to play a greater role, now that the Yugoslav parties had refused to accept the European Peace Plan.

In reply to another question, the Secretary-General said that his Personal Envoy, Cyrus Vance, was now in Yugoslavia to gather information and

(more)

For information media—not an official record

to try to assist the European Community in its peace efforts. He emphasized that only the Security Council has authority to apply sanctions against Yugoslavia.

A United Nations spokesman said today that Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar had received a report from Mr. Vance regarding his meetings with various leaders in Yugoslavia. Mr. Vance would spend today in Belgrade and leave tomorrow for Budapest, Vienna and Rome, capitals of three neighbouring countries. On Friday, Mr. Vance would go to the Vatican for a meeting with the Pope, after which he would travel to Paris. Mr. Vance was expected to be back in New York on Saturday to report to the Secretary-General.

* * *

The Security Council this morning voted unanimously to extend the mandate of the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA) until 30 April 1992.

The Council took that action by adopting resolution 719 (1991), by which it also approved the Secretary-General report on the Observer Group's activities for the past six months.

ONUCA, which was established in November 1989 to monitor specific security commitments made by the five Central American Governments under the Esquipulas II Agreements, has now had its mandate renewed four times. In once again renewing the mandate, the Council emphasized the need "to continue to monitor expenditures carefully during this period of increasing demands on peace-keeping resources".

In line with that concern over expenditures, the Council asked the Secretary-General to report to the Council within three months, taking account of any developments in the region which indicate that ONUCA's size or future should be reconsidered.

* * *

The General Assembly completed yesterday its debate on strengthening United Nations humanitarian emergency assistance, hearing calls for reform, including proposals to improving the efficiency of the Organization through the establishment of an emergency fund. Speakers also called for the appointment of a high-level Coordinator to help speed up the Organization's response to humanitarian emergencies.

Among those addressing the Assembly, the representative of the United States, Jonathan Moore, asserted that reform and renewal of the United Nations humanitarian assistance activities should be an integral part of overall Secretariat reform, which he said was critically needed. The designation of a fund and the setting up of a Committee would not in itself "do the trick", he said.

(more)

Other speakers expressed concern over the issue of State sovereignty, saying humanitarian assistance could be used as a pretext to disguise political intervention. The representative of Cuba, Carlos Fernandez de Cossio Dominguez, rejected any interpretation that implied a right to intervene in the internal affairs of States. He said the requirement of respect for the sovereignty of States was absolute and opposed any global practice of "limited sovereignty".

* * *

The Secretary-General reports that the cease-fire in Angola has been well respected by both sides since it took effect over five months ago. The arrangements for the cease-fire were spelled out in the Peace Accords for Angola, reached in May between the Angolan Government and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA).

In a report to the Security Council of 31 October on the United Nations Verification Mission in Angola (UNAVEM II), covering the period 31 May to 25 October, the Secretary-General said that the cease-fire provided a sound basis for implementation of all the other provisions of the Peace Accords. However, he said, the two parties had only partly complied with the Peace Accords' provisions relating to the assembly of troops. That situation undermined confidence, the Secretary-General said, and could endanger other aspects of the Peace Accords.

As for the possible role of the United Nations in forthcoming elections in Angola, no decision has yet been taken by the Angolan authorities to request the Organization to provide technical assistance or electoral observers. There were, however, the Secretary-General reported, strong indications of a growing consensus in Angola that the United Nations should be involved.

* * *

The United Nations was commemorating today the International Day of Solidarity with detained United Nations staff. According to the United Nations Staff Union, there are currently more than one hundred staff members imprisoned around the world.

With the theme "When one of us is imprisoned, none of us is free", the Day of Solidarity featured as guest speaker Middle East correspondent Charles Glass, who was taken hostage in Lebanon four years ago, but managed to escape from captivity.

* * *

The General Assembly's Second Committee (Economic and Financial) has approved a draft resolution in support of the initiative taken by the World Health Organization (WHO) and Ghana to hold an International Forum on Health in Accra this December.

(more)

Approved without a vote, the draft would have the Assembly invite Member States, the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations to support the Forum, at which special consideration would be given to improving the health and economic situation of vulnerable and marginalized groups, especially women in developing countries.

* * *

The Secretary-General's Spokesman told correspondents today that Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar, during a meeting this morning with the Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations, had appealed on humanitarian grounds for the restoration of freedom to 1991 Nobel Prize Winner Aung San Suu Kyi.

The spokesman said that the Secretary-General had also asked that her family be allowed to visit her, and had noted the widespread anxiety over the state of her health. The Ambassador of Myanmar had told the Secretary-General that "Mrs. Suu Kyi is in good health and free to leave the country if she decides to go into exile".

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1013
7 November 1991

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

◆ Pledging Conference for 1992 Development Activities ends with United Nations Agencies appealing for increased support.

◆ New peace prospects could make 1992 "year of voluntary repatriation", High Commissioner tells Social Committee, as it begins discussion of plight of refugees and displaced persons.

◆ Needy Iraqis assured emergency food rations until end of year, World Food Programme says.

◆ Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator reports

* * *

A two-day Pledging Conference for Development Activities for 1992 ended yesterday at Headquarters with appeals from United Nations Agencies for increased support for their programmes and activities.

More than 60 States made pledges at the annual Conference, which is the principal forum for States to announce their contributions to the various bodies of the United Nations system for its development activities.

Addressing the Conference, the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), William H. Draper III, said that pledges suggested that 1992 contributions to the Programme would only total $1.06 billion -- almost $250 million less than the target of $1.3 billion. That would make it difficult for the UNDP to meet planned country allocations, he said.

In his statement, the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), James P. Grant, said the total income of the UNICEF for 1992 was estimated at $850 million. However, he said, the announced pledges and estimated government contributions totalled only half of that amount. If goals for children in the 1990s were to be met, each donor would have to increase aid allocations for human development, he stated.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

The Executive Director of United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Dr. Nafis Sadik, said countries had pledged only half of the total estimated income of UNFPA for 1992, which was $221 million. The Fund had received requests for population assistance totalling over $550 million and would need an 18 per cent increase in contributions to meet the decade's population goals.

* * *

New prospects for peace in Central America, Asia and Africa could make 1992 "the year of voluntary repatriation", the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) told the Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) this morning, as it began its debate on refugee questions.

Mrs. Sadako Ogata also stressed the need to reconcile the principle of national sovereignty with humanitarian access to the internally displaced. The UNHCR's non-political and humanitarian role must be accepted by local Governments, she said, emphasizing her organization's mission to contribute to peace through its determined pursuit of lasting humanitarian solutions.

In another introductory statement, James O.C. Jonah, Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Questions, Regional Cooperation, Decolonization and Trusteeship, called attention to the plight of some 4.5 million returnees, displaced persons and refugees in Southern Africa. He stressed that urgent relief should be provided with a view to recovery and development in that region.

In a separate development, the UNHCR is commemorating its 40th anniversary with an exhibit at Headquarters called "four decades of international protection and care for refugees". The Exhibit, which will be on display through November, highlights with maps, photos and 3-dimensional sculptures, the emergencies of the past 40 years, and the on-going search for solutions for today's 17 million refugees.

* * *

The World Food Programme (WFP) announced today that it would extend its current relief operations inside Iraq to feed more than 1.5 million poor people affected by the 1990 Gulf war, for another 2 months.

Since March, the Agency has held sole responsibility for the United Nations emergency food operations inside Iraq. The operations were originally intended to last only until September. However, the food supply situation facing vulnerable groups in Iraq continues to be precarious, the WFP states.

To help meet these needs, the Agency has approved the supply of another 35,156 tonnes of emergency food for Kurds in the northern part of Iraq, for the displaced people in the south and 150,000 people still moving from place to place. The cost of the new operation is just over $15.3 million.

(more)

* * *

The Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO) in Geneva reported today that floods caused by a tropical storm which hit the central Philippines on 5 November had killed 2155 and injured 37.

The Agency reported that electricity and communications were not operational in the affected areas. So far, the UNDRO said, the Government of that country had not requested international assistance.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1013/Rev.1*
7 November 1991

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Pledging Conference for 1992 Development Activities ends with United Nations Agencies appealing for increased support.

- New peace prospects could make 1992 "year of voluntary repatriation", High Commissioner tells Social Committee, as it begins discussion of plight of refugees and displaced persons.

- Needy Iraqis assured emergency food rations until end of year, World Food Programme says.

- Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator reports 2155 dead in floods which struck Phulippines on 5 November.

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(more)

* Revised to include a line of the fourth headline, which was deleted in error.

For information media—not an official record

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